



TOMPKINS COUNTY
OFFICE FOR THE AGING

Aging Better, Together

Annual Report 2020

**OLDER
AMERICANS
MONTH**



COMMUNITIES OF STRENGTH: MAY 2021



From the Director...

It is my privilege to present the Tompkins County Office for the Aging's Annual Report for 2020. Serving Tompkins County since 1975, the Office for the Aging, our contractors, and our local network of service providers work together to make Tompkins County a great place to live, work, retire and age in community.

Each May, the Administration for Community Living leads the celebration of Older Americans Month (OAM). This year's theme is *Communities of Strength*, recognizing the important role older adults play in fostering the connection and engagement that build strong, resilient communities. In tough times, communities find strength in people—and people find strength in their communities. This past year, we've seen this time and again in Tompkins County as friends, neighbors, and businesses have found new ways to support each other. In our community, older adults are a key source of this strength. Through their experiences, successes, and difficulties, they have built resilience that helps them to face new challenges. When communities tap into this, they become stronger too.

Strength is built and shown not only by bold acts, but also by small ones of day-to-day life—a conversation shared with a friend, working in the garden, trying a new recipe, or taking time for a cup of tea on a busy day. And when we share these activities with others—even virtually or by telling about the experience later—we help them build resilience too.

This Annual Report shares the programmatic highlights and the core services provided by the Office for the Aging in 2020. Our work is made possible through dedicated staff, volunteers, subcontractors and community partners. Together, we were able to coordinate assistance with increased needs as people were isolating throughout the pandemic. Needs such as food and medicine delivery, taxes, stimulus payments, health and wellness calls, addressing social isolation, and assisting hundreds of people with navigating online systems to receive their Covid-19 vaccination.

Our charge did not change, we have and will continue to be here to assist our community. Although we have had to be flexible and shift with the changing environment to provide services and address client need, we continue to assist older adults and persons with long term care needs to live independently in their homes and communities with quality of life and dignity. We are also continuing to work on new initiatives such as our Age Friendly Center for Excellence grant from the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York. This initiative was funded to help us strengthen communities and guide local governments to incorporate healthy, age friendly principles into relevant policies and programs.

It is through these collaborative endeavors that we maintain a network of home and community-based services for older adults in Tompkins County. Together, we can find strength—and create a stronger future. We thank the Tompkins County Legislature for their ongoing support for our programs, and the community of taxpayers to whom we are responsible.

Sincerely,
Lisa Monroe



COMMUNITIES OF STRENGTH: MAY 2021

Our Mission

To assist older adults and persons with long term care needs to live independently in their homes and communities with quality of life and dignity.



Office for the Aging Staff

Caryn Bullis, Deputy Director
Trish Chevallard, Aging Services Specialist
Andrea Davis, Outreach Worker
Jessica Harris-Giannicchi, Part-time Account Clerk/Typist
Amy Jackson, Aging Services Specialist
Rae Lobрева, Part-time Office Assistant
Kate Lyon, Ombudsman Program & Outreach Specialist

Rodney Maine, Aging Services Specialist
Susan Martin, Part-time Dietitian
Lisa Monroe, Director
Robert Slocum, Fiscal Coordinator
Dawn Sprague, Aging Services Specialist
Tom Weber, Part-time Outreach Worker
Donna Wilmot, Principal Account Clerk Typist



2020-2021 Advisory Committee Members

Pat Curran
Susan Hatch
Carol Mallison
Carrie Shearer

Joanne Izbicki
Wilma Lawrence
Sandra Pollack

Charlie Hart
Bill Lesser
Patricia Stamm

Advisory Committee Liaisons

Amanda Champion, Tompkins County Legislature
Meghan Molloy, Tompkins County Public Library
Samantha Hillson, Tompkins County Health Department
Jessica Gosa, Foodnet Meals on Wheels
Sarah Askew, StateWide Senior Action
Jan Lynch, Finger Lakes Independence Center
Lucia Sacco, Lifelong

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Aging Services Network Meetings

The Office for the Aging organizes monthly Aging Services Network Meetings, attended by local aging services professionals and the general public. In 2020, topics included:

- COFA's Caregivers Services
- Community Updates
- Levene, Gouldin and Thompson-Legal Issues

Collaborations with Educational Institutions

Cornell University, Tompkins Cortland Community College, Ithaca College, and Binghamton University provide us with student volunteers, interns and work-study students. Students serve as friendly visitors in the Project CARE program, help with administrative work and assist with evaluations and publications. Faculty and staff involved with gerontology at Cornell University and Ithaca College regularly share information and expertise with the local aging services network through the Office for the Aging.

2020 student office interns:

Nora Truitt, Binghamton University
Vanessa Mitchell-Wagner, Binghamton University



In 2020, Office for the Aging staff members served on several Boards and Advisory Committees including:

- Human Services Coalition Board
- Health Planning Council Board
- Long Term Care Committee of the Health Planning Council
- Visiting Nurse Service Board and Professional Advisory Committee
- Gadabout Board
- Workforce Development Board
- Tompkins County Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- Tompkins County Public Information Officers Team
- Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Planning Committee
- Tompkins County Health & Human Services Cabinet
- Depression Conference Steering Committee
- Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services/Better Housing for Tompkins County Board
- Vision Zero Stakeholders Committee
- Homeless and Housing Taskforce
- Continuum of Care
- Safety Committee



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In 2020, due to the pandemic, outreach events were scarcely held. However, the Office for the Aging staff were still able to engage in outreach and offered information and presentations. Those groups and topics included:

- Titus Towers
- Loaves and Fishes
- Ellis Hollow Apartments
- Cayuga Meadows Apartments
- Center Court Village Apartments
- Vaccine Outreach to 65+
- Distribution of Masks
- Food Box deliveries
- Increased Outreach to PERS and Foodnet clients

TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In order to remain current in the field of aging, Office for the Aging staff participated in trainings in 2020 on many topics including the following:

- Peer Place
- Medicare/Health Insurance Trainings
- Caregiver Trainings
- Trauma Informed Care
- Community Based Services
- Pooled Trusts
- Benefits
- Department of Health/COVID-19
- Nursing Homes and Assisted Living
- Volunteer Recruitment and Management
- Elder Abuse
- Person Centered Planning and Practice
- Age Friendly
- Combating Social Isolation

COFA IN THE COMMUNITY



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INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging is the community's primary source for information and assistance about the array of services available to older adults, caregivers, and persons with long term care needs.

✓ Outreach

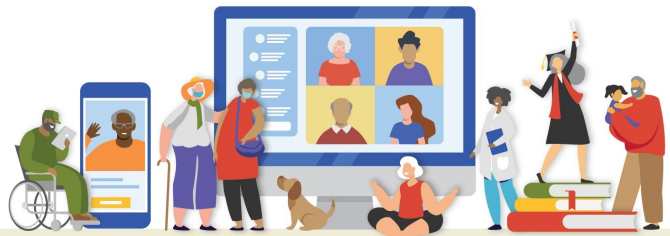
Throughout the pandemic, the Office for the Aging and its subcontractors continued to work to bring services to older adults who needed them. In 2020, the Office for the Aging had 621 community outreach contacts with older adults.

✓ *Senior Circle* Newsletter

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging and Lifelong jointly publish the quarterly *Senior Circle* Newsletter. Mailed to over 12,000 older adults in Tompkins County, the *Senior Circle* is a valuable medium to inform people of vital services and events.

✓ Insurance Counseling

The Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) is offered through a contract with Lifelong. In 2020, we had two trained counselors on staff at the Office for the Aging and 7 volunteer counselors coordinated through Lifelong. Trained HIICAP counselors offer one-on-one counseling as well as group presentations on the various aspects of Medicare, Medicaid, private health insurance, long term care insurance, and prescription drug coverage including Medicare Part D and EPIC. The HIICAP program served 574 individuals in 2020.





LONG TERM CARE ASSISTANCE

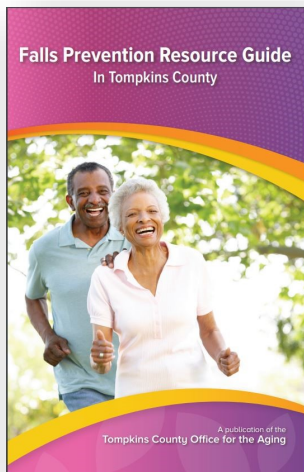
Long Term Care Assistance programs provide a continuum of care and supports to older adults and their families. Long term care services span from small, practical supports which help to keep people living in their homes longer, to hands-on personal care in the home, to assistance and advocacy within nursing homes. Long Term Care Assistance Programs include the following:

✓ Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)

PERS is a communication system which links an individual with a call center that can dispatch emergency responders when needed or contact a designated person or persons. This system provides 24-hour-a-day protection for individuals who are frail and at risk of falling or other medical emergencies. PERS units are available for rental through the Office for the Aging. During 2020, a total of 462 people utilized PERS machines provided through the Office for the Aging.



"I needed my alert system when I fell getting out of the shower this morning. I had asked the system to add my neighbor to the list of people to call, they did just that. I called the alert system and thanked them for following my request. This is my lucky day-I'm up and no broken bones!"



✓ Falls Prevention

Many falls are preventable. Trained outreach staff from the Office for the Aging offer Home Safety Assessments to older adults in the community. During an assessment, fall hazards are identified and addressed wherever possible. If necessary, assistance and referrals are provided for issues requiring modification or repair, such as installation of grab bars or railings. Due to the pandemic, in 2020, Office for the Aging staff assisted 1 client with Home Safety Assessments.

LONG TERM CARE ASSISTANCE



NY Connects
Your Link to Long Term
Services and Supports

✓ **NY Connects Long Term Care Services**

Staff at NY Connects provide objective and unbiased information about long term care options in Tompkins County. A partnership between the Office for the Aging, the Department of Social Services, Finger Lakes Independence Center, Tompkins County Mental Health, and Office for Persons With Developmental Disabilities, NY Connects offers information about long term care to consumers of any age, regardless of income or payer source.

✓ **The Long Term Care Committee of the Health Planning Council**

serves as the NY Connects Long Term Care Council. The Long Term Care Committee plays an active role in ensuring a coordinated local long term care delivery system, identifying needs and gaps in service and recommending system improvements.

✓ **Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)**

The EISEP Program provides case management, homemaking/personal care and housekeeping/chore services on a sliding fee scale to income-eligible older adults. Case management is offered through contract with Tompkins County Adult and Long Term Care Services, and aide service is offered through contract with Caregivers, Home Instead Senior Care, Comfort Keepers and Stafkings. During 2020, 153 frail elders received case management services, 29 individuals were served with 3,894.25 hours of homemaker/personal care services, and 60 individuals were served with 4,381 hours of housekeeper/chore services. Additionally, under the consumer directed component of EISEP, 28 clients hired their own aides and were provided with 8,494 hours of service. Finger Lakes Independence Center is the fiscal intermediary for consumer directed services.

LONG TERM CARE ASSISTANCE



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✓ The Registry

The Office for the Aging contracts with the Finger Lakes Independence Center to offer the Registry Program. The Registry is a free service linking individuals in need of in-home help with independent job seekers. The Registry lists jobs for personal care aides, home health aides, elder companions, housekeepers and cooks. The program prescreens and checks references for all caregivers. The family must interview and negotiate the specific terms of employment. During 2020, 48 older adults utilized the services of the Registry.



✓ Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program works to resolve concerns expressed by, or on behalf of residents of long term care facilities. This is accomplished by recruiting and training community volunteers to visit long term care facilities and advocate on behalf of residents, giving them a stronger voice in their own care and lives. In 2020, our program had 4 certified long term care ombudsman volunteers serving Tompkins, Schuyler, and Chemung Counties.



**Office of the State
Long Term Care
Ombudsman**

✓ Friendly Visiting

The Friendly Visitor Program of the Office for the Aging matches older adults with volunteers who offer companionship and a chance for sharing time and mutual interests. The Office for the Aging partners with Project Generations Programs at both Ithaca College and Cornell University, whose student volunteers are paired with older adults. During 2020, volunteers provided 22 individuals with weekly friendly visits.

The woman I visited with taught me a lot about life and shared so many cool stories with me. I really appreciate having her in my life and all that we have shared together. I am so thankful for this club!" -T.M., Volunteer



SERVICES

The Mosaic Program (formerly Northside Southside Program)

Historically, this program originated as a visiting, shopping and social programming service to the Northside and Southside communities which in the late 70's-80's were predominately black communities. Over the years those communities demographics have somewhat changed and program attendance changed along with it. Lifelong is working with community groups to re-evaluate the program to best serve community interest. The goals of the Mosaic Program are to enhance programming with regards to diverse program topics, learn from experiences of those who may be marginalized and strive for offerings that are inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible, and look at several diverse populations including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and people with disabilities. We anticipate programming to begin in 2022.



Legal Services

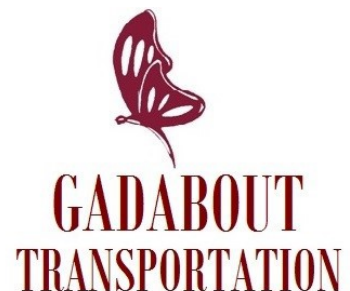
The Office for the Aging contracts with Legal Assistance of Western New York to provide eligible clients with legal assistance on civil matters such as evictions, foreclosures or public benefits. In 2020, 3 people received 7.5 hours of legal assistance.

AMP-Aging Mastery Program

The Office for the Aging contracts with Lifelong to offer the Aging Mastery Program (AMP). This program offers 10 classes that encourages developing behaviors across many dimensions that will lead to improved health, stronger financial security, and overall well-being. This program was held in the Fall of 2020 and served a total of 9 people.

Transportation

The Office for the Aging now partners with Gadabout for transportation services by purchasing tickets in bulk to distribute to persons over 60 or with disabilities from our office.



NUTRITION PROGRAM



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The nutrition program is provided through a subcontract with Foodnet Meals on Wheels and offers meals to older adults, both in their homes, and at social dining sites throughout Tompkins County. The nutrition program assures that participants receive a nutritious, hot meal up to five days per week, options for evening sandwich meals and weekend frozen meals. Foodnet's Registered Dietitian provides nutrition education and counseling.

✓ Congregate Meals

This service provides older adults with hot noontime meals Monday through Friday, along with an opportunity for social time and links to other health and supportive services. Social dining is offered 5 days per week in Groton and Titus Towers and 1 day per week at the YMCA. A voluntary and confidential contribution of \$8 is suggested, but no person is denied a meal if they are unable to contribute. During 2020, 137 people were served with 16,858 grab and go meals due to the closing of congregate sites because of the pandemic.



✓ Home Delivered Meals

This service is provided to Tompkins County older adults who are homebound and/or unable to prepare their own meals. A hot mid-day meal is delivered weekdays, with the option of an additional sandwich meal for the evening. Frozen meals are provided for weekends and holidays. A voluntary and confidential contribution of \$8 daily per hot meal or \$9.50 daily for hot meal and sandwich is suggested, but no person is denied a meal if they are unable to contribute. During 2020, 600 seniors were served 141,597 meals in their homes.



NUTRITION PROGRAM

✓ Nutrition Counseling

Nutritional assessment and counseling is provided to older adults on a one-on-one basis. Foodnet's registered dietitian assists older adults in understanding their dietary needs and restrictions, and provides methods for changing their dietary habits. During 2020, 360 people were provided with 486 hours of nutrition counseling.

✓ Nutrition Education

Nutrition education is provided to Foodnet participants in a group setting, covering topics of interest and emphasizing good nutrition as a component of health. During 2020, 593 older adults received 4,367 hours of nutrition education.



✓ Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program

The Office for the Aging distributes coupon booklets worth \$20 to income-eligible households. Coupons are for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables at participating NYS Farmers Markets. During 2020, 660 booklets were distributed to seniors throughout Tompkins County.

HOME REPAIR AND ENERGY SERVICES



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Home repair and energy services assist older homeowners in maintaining their homes and living safely, independently and affordably.



Ithaca Neighborhood
HOUSING SERVICES



BETTER HOUSING
for Tompkins County

Together we are increasing quality housing opportunities for Tompkins County and beyond.

✓ Tompkins County Small Home Repair Program

The Office for the Aging contracts with Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services to provide small home repairs and safety modifications for older adults in Tompkins County. Priority is given to income-eligible seniors who need repairs related to health and safety in order to remain independent in their homes. This program continues to work hand in hand with COFA's Falls Home Safety Assessment Program where COFA's Outreach Workers provide valuable home visits to identify fall hazards and modifications that can be made in the home. In 2020, the Small Home Repair Program served 75 older adults with 1,213.60 hours of service.



HOME REPAIR AND ENERGY SERVICES



✓ Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The HEAP Program offers benefits to income eligible individuals to offset the costs of heating their homes or apartments. During 2020, the Office for the Aging processed 501 HEAP applications for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

TOMPKINS COUNTY PROJECT LIFESAVER



"Bringing loved ones home"



Tompkins County Website: <http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/sheriff>

The Tompkins County Sheriff's Office offers **Project Lifesaver**, a radio location device for tracking individuals who wander. The Office for the Aging partners with the Sheriff's Office to refer caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's Disease or other dementias, as well as autism and Down's Syndrome, to sign up for this important service when needed. Currently, 24 individuals in Tompkins County utilize the Project Lifesaver program.

CAREGIVER SERVICES



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Family caregivers are an integral component of the long-term care system, and the Office for the Aging supports them through a number of services.

✓ Project CARE

Project CARE is an initiative of the Office for the Aging that can help stressed caregivers and the older adults for whom they are caring. The Office for the Aging matches older adults and their caregivers with volunteers who are able to help with a number of tasks including errands, shopping, light housekeeping, yard work, and respite. Volunteers provide opportunities for socialization to those who are homebound and isolated. Additionally, the Office for the Aging contracts with agencies to provide professional respite for older adults with medical needs.



CAREGIVER SERVICES

✓ Caregivers' Resource Center & Alzheimer's Support Unit

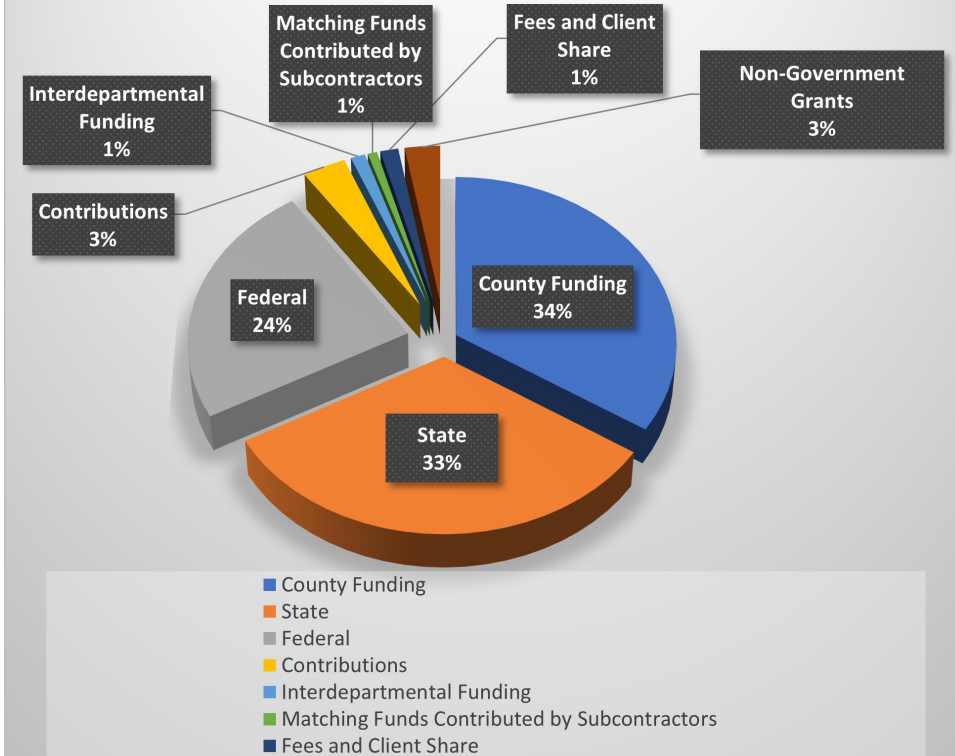
The Caregivers' Resource Center provides:

- Information for caregivers
- Options counseling for caregivers
- A lending library of written and digital materials—including local resource guides
- Quarterly *In Support of Caregivers* newsletter
- Workshops on caregiving issues
- Support Group for caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's and other dementias.
- Six week workshop series: Powerful Tools for Caregivers





Tompkins County Office for the Aging Sources of Funding for 2020



FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT
County Funding	\$964,176
State	\$915,792
Federal	\$666,664
Contributions	\$94,950
Interdepartmental Funding	\$31,782
Matching Funds Contributed by Subcontractors	\$20,843
Fees and Client Share	\$39,288
Non-Government Grants	\$77,184
	\$2,810,679

Tompkins County Office for the Aging 2020 Funding Sources	2020 Program Totals
Alzheimer's Association of CNY Respite Grant	\$12,775
Age Friendly Center for Excellence Grant	\$63,694
Care Compass Grant	\$715
Federal Balancing Incentives Program: Expanded NY Connects	\$254,643
Federal Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program	\$33,006
Federal Home Energy Assistance Program	\$45,253
Federal Medicare Improvements Patients and Providers Act	\$13,155
Federal Nutrition Services for the Elderly Program	\$113,610
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIIB	\$339,221
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIIC	\$391,535
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIID	\$5,367
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIIE (National Family Caregivers Act)	\$58,738
FFCRA/CARES Funding	\$191,779
Locally Funded Small Home and Safety Program	\$28,078
Locally Funded Personal Emergency Response Program	\$30,689
NYS Caregiver Resource Center	\$21,839
NYS Community Services for the Elderly Program	\$190,848
NYS Unmet Needs Program	\$107,216
NYS Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program	\$472,495
NYS Long Term Care Ombudsman Program	\$132,883
NYS Wellness in Nutrition	\$303,140
TOTAL:	\$2,810,679

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH



MAKE YOUR MARK: MAY 2020



NY Connects
Your Link to Long Term
Services and Supports

of TOMPKINS COUNTY

(800) 342-9871 607-274-5482

Tompkins County Human Services Annex Building
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<http://tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa>

